

From student beds to senior living:

Reside Summit 2026 tackles the full spectrum of South African housing



JOHANNESBURG – Whether you're a first-year student sharing a res room, a young family renting your first home, a proud homeowner or a retiree looking for secure and dignified living – housing touches every person in South Africa. That impact spans every life stage, every income bracket and every tenure type.

The Reside Summit 2026, to be held this month (20-21 May) at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, is the only national platform confronting the reality of dignified housing head-on. Across two days, developers, financiers, legal experts, and policymakers will answer one urgent question: *How do we build homes that work for all of us – not just the wealthy?*

Student living: a base for academic success (or failure)

With over 1500 delegates expected, the Reside Summit bridges housing silos that have historically operated in isolation. Covering everything from student accommodation to social housing, affordable rentals and senior living, the gathering's core argument is simple: no single housing segment can succeed in isolation.



Peter Stainton, Executive Head of Property Management at Eris Property Group, will unpack the future of student living, a sector undergoing rapid professionalisation. Students no longer want only a bed and desk, but rather a space that offers technology that improves daily life and supports wellness. *“A future-proof student living environment is an invisible ecosystem where smart tech quietly removes friction and supports wellbeing,” says Stainton. “When students notice the technology, it’s probably not working.”*

Stainton warns that even when the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) implements funding caps and faces institutional pressures, the human element cannot be sacrificed for efficiency.

“Scale should help protect humanity, with student community and wellbeing treated as essentials, not optional extras. Student living sits at a life-defining transition. Getting it right directly shapes academic success and whether students persist or fall behind,” Stainton says.

Senior living: from ambition to implementation

For the first time, the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) will host a dedicated Senior Living Lounge at the Summit, signalling a major push into ageing-in-place infrastructure.



Palesa Ryan, DBSA's Head of Social Housing, Affordable Housing, Student Housing, Health Care and Education, says the bank's presence signals a shift from talk to action.

"We want developers, investors and policymakers to see us not just as a financier, but as a strategic partner that helps unlock complex projects and crowd in capital at scale," says Ryan.

"Bankable, climate-aligned infrastructure is achievable when you combine the right policy signals, blended finance and strong project preparation. If we get that right, we can accelerate delivery, reduce risk and build more inclusive, resilient cities across the region."

The legal final mile: protecting wealth when systems fail

Property law sits at the final mile of every residential transaction. But too often, that mile is a minefield.



Sanelisiwe Ngcobo (fondly known as “Saneli”), Founder & MD of Ngcobo SN Inc, will argue at the Reside Summit that faster housing delivery requires coordinated accountability across the entire value chain – not just at the point of transfer.

“Developers play a critical upstream role. Early-stage compliance around zoning, township establishment, service installation and approvals can significantly reduce delays later,” says Ngcobo. *“When developments are properly structured from the outset, conveyancing becomes faster, more predictable and more accessible to the end buyer.”*

On protecting homeowners’ wealth in the face of failing municipalities, Ngcobo is blunt: *“Conveyancers can no longer operate as passive processors. We need to interrogate compliance more rigorously – municipal accounts, clearance processes, zoning, service delivery exposure – and translate those risks into clear, practical advice. Protecting wealth in property means shifting from simply transferring ownership to actively safeguarding the asset.”*

Housing for South Africa: the summit at a glance

The Reside Summit 2026 is South Africa's premier residential property and housing development conference, taking place on 20–21 May 2026 at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg. The purpose of the Summit is to accelerate delivery of inclusive, resilient housing across all life stages, income brackets and tenure types.



*"Housing is not a single sector. It's a continuum," says **Debbie Tagg, Chair of the Reside Summit.** "This year's Summit brings together the full spectrum of voices and expertise needed to move South African housing forward. Every conversation we have over these two days is in service of helping to build a country that works for all its people."*

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ABOUT RESIDE SUMMIT

Launched in 2023, the Residential Investment & Development (Reside) Summit aims to bridge the gap between stakeholders in the public and private sector, construction firms, property developers, investors, financial institutions, and industry bodies.





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